

Remarks

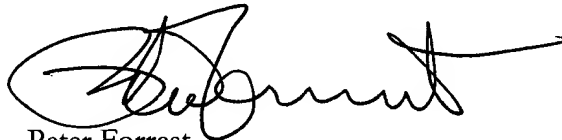
Claims 1-18 were filed and are pending in the application prior to the amendments above.

Claims 1-2, 4-13, and 15-18 are finally rejected. Claims 3 and 14 are objected to as allowable if amended to incorporate the limitations of claims upon which they depend.

Solely to advance prosecution and without acquiescence to the Examiner's position, claim 1 is cancelled, claim 2 amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 3 (which in turn is cancelled), and claim 4 is amended to incorporate the limitations of claim 14 (which in turn is cancelled). This should render claims 2 and 4 allowable for the reasons that claims 3 and 14 were indicated to be allowable. Claims 15-18 are cancelled to avoid inconsistent interpretation of claim 4 as amended. Furthermore, the Examiner has not acknowledged whether he disputes that Michaeli is prior art under 35 USC §102(e) as of only May 26, 2000, which is after the filing date to which this application is entitled by priority to the provisional application filed November 10, 1999. Thus, applicants maintain that the rejections of claims 16 and 17 based in part on Michaeli should have been withdrawn for that reason alone. This issue will be pursued in a continuing application and no estoppel based on accepting the Examiner's position is intended.

All amendments are made without prejudice to pursuit of the pre-amended claims in a continuing application. In this application, all claims should be allowed. If you have any questions, please contact me at your convenience.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Forrest', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Peter Forrest
Registration No. 33,235

September 12, 2005